

Khartoum envoy meets Garang

KAMPALA (R) — The Sudanese government and rebel leader John Garang opened talks under Ugandan mediation on Monday to end more than 10 years of civil war. Sudan's representative, Minister for Economic Planning and Investment Ali Al Hajj Mohammad, said the talks had made some headway but details would be worked out Tuesday. The talks were held under the auspices of Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni, who is keen to end the conflict along his northern border. State radio said he told the two delegations that "secondary issues" were holding up a solution to Africa's twin problems of independent decision-making and underdevelopment. Mr. Mohammad said Colonel Garang, leader of the fractious Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), had agreed in principle to attend a further round of peace talks known as the Abuja round after the Nigerian capital in which they were held in 1992. But further Abuja talks depended on the reaction of other factions of the SPLA, which has splintered in the past 18 months, he said. Col. Garang was not available for comment.

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Arafat to Clinton: Time running out

SANA (API) — Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat, addressing U.S. President Bill Clinton, warned Monday of war in the Middle East if a speedy solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict were not found soon. "The Balkanisation of the region is coming if there is to be no peaceful settlement. I say this to Clinton," Arafat said at a meeting early in the day with a number of Arab reporters in Sanaa. "Stability in the region is important for U.S. and European interests," he added. "Balkanisation" is a term used earlier this century to describe the process of breaking up a region into small, mutually hostile political units as in the Balkans after World War I. Mr. Arafat was in Yemen as U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher held talks with two neighbouring key allies, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. He warned that Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, with whom Mr. Christopher is scheduled to meet on Tuesday, "will only have himself to blame for the crazy escalation of terrorism against our Palestinian people."

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جورдан تايمز جريدة معاصرة مختصة في المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية، الرأي



Egypt may boost mission in Baghdad

CAIRO (R) — Egypt is considering sending a more senior diplomat to its caretaker mission in Baghdad to improve services to the Egyptian community in Iraq, a Foreign Ministry source said Monday. He was commenting on a report in the semi-official newspaper Al Ahram quoting Foreign Minister Amr Musa as denying that Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz would visit Cairo but adding that Egypt might strengthen its mission in Baghdad. The leader of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), Yasser Arafat, has been trying to reconcile Iraq and Egypt.

Algerian delegation visits Morocco

RABAT (R) — A member of Algeria's five-man collective presidency arrived in Morocco for high-level talks Monday, a month after the two countries exchanged new ambassadors. Diplomats and Redha Malek, who is also foreign minister, were expected to meet King Hassan and Moroccan Foreign Minister Abdu Lafi Filali in a brief visit. Ties between the two neighbours, strained for a long time because of conflict in the Western Sahara, were soured in January when Algeria interpreted comments by King Hassan as implicit support for Muslim fundamentalists in Algeria. In a statement at Rabat airport, Mr. Malek said the Algerian leadership had decided "to send one of its members to resume the dialogue between our two countries at the highest level."

Denkatch threatens to boycott U.N. talks

ISTANBUL (R) — Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denkatch said Monday he would stay away from U.N.-sponsored talks if their objective to compel his community to make peace with Greek Cypriots on unacceptable terms. "I will not go to New York to attend the U.N. talks if the Turkish Cypriots are forced to reach agreement with a Greek-Cypriot administration that does not want a federation," Mr. Denkatch told a meeting at Istanbul's Marmara university. Cyprus President-elect Glafcos Clerides has asked for talks on how to reunite the divided island, originally scheduled for March 25, to be postponed, possibly to mid-April.

Angolan peace talks set for Friday

LISBON (R) — Peace talks between the Angolan government and the rebel movement UNITA will be held in the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa Friday. J.N. representative in Angola Margarida Antunes was quoted as saying on Monday. UNITA had agreed to accept U.N. measures to guarantee the safety and security of the UNITA delegation, the Portuguese news agency Lusa quoted Ms. Antunes as saying in its bi-monthly report. The two sides have been locked in renewed conflict since the end of December and a first round of talks in Addis Ababa in late January failed to produce a ceasefire (see page 8).

Spin hospitalised

WASHINGTON (AP) — Defense Secretary Les Aspin was reported Monday to be "clearly improved" after being hospitalized last Sunday for shortness of breath attributed to a "mild pre-existing heart condition," the Pentagon said. A statement released at the Pentagon said Mr. Aspin's physicians at Georgetown University Hospital had examined him at mid-morning and found him "to be clearly improved."

Gyptians leave for talks with Sudan

JRO (R) — An Egyptian delegation left for Khartoum Monday for a new round of talks on a border dispute with Sudan, a senior Egyptian spokesman said. Talks will be at a lower level than previous rounds. The semi-official newspaper Al Ahram said it is led by an ambassador, Sabir Mugbil, rather than presidential adviser Osama Al Baz. Mr. Baz excused himself on the grounds that he was involved in sensitive diplomacy to resolve a dispute over Palestinians expelled from Israel, it said.

Christopher arrives in Israel voicing hope for resumption of peace talks

U.S. envoy assures Saudi Arabia, Kuwait of support, pays dramatic Beirut visit to meet Lebanese leaders

Combined agency despatches

TEL AVIV — U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher said upon his arrival in Israel Monday he hoped Middle East peace talks would resume soon.

Mr. Christopher, visiting Israel for two days of talks with Israeli and Palestinian leaders, is ending a week-long peace mission in the region.

"I hope that the negotiations will be resumed at the very earliest date," he said at Ben Gurion airport after landing in a flight from Cyprus.

"I hope with the help of the United States as a partner we can build this process towards a real breakthrough rather than a missed opportunity."

Mr. Christopher told Foreign Minister Shimon Peres the purpose of the tour was to revive the peace process as soon as possible.

"President Bill Clinton has sent me to this region to assess, to consult and to focus the parties all the parties on the importance of resuming the process at the very earliest date," he said.

Before leaving Cyprus for Israel earlier in the evening, Mr. Christopher said that a consensus has emerged among the Arab countries he has visited during his whirlwind visit to renew the process as soon as

possible. Mr. Christopher has to overcome a Palestinian commitment to stay away from the talks until Israel returns some 400 Palestinians expelled to Lebanon two months ago.

A dramatic visit to Beirut earlier Monday focused on the expellees. Lebanese Foreign Minister Firas Bouez said at a news conference that Lebanon would be satisfied if the Palestinians return "during an acceptable period of time."

The soft-line stand echoed that of Syria, the main power behind the Lebanese government. Damascus said Saturday it would not derail the talks for the sake of the expellees.

Mr. Christopher emphasised the traditionally close U.S.-Israel relationship in his remarks to Mr. Peres. "The ties between our two countries have proven strong and resilient," he said, "and President Clinton is determined to make them even stronger."

Mr. Peres told Mr. Christopher: "We know that you are representing an administration ... that has started anew the process of peace and we do hope that this is the first step to the continuation of the peace negotiations."

Mr. Christopher, who has greeted him by a massive police presence, was whisked off to occupied Jerusalem.

He will meet with Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and members of the Palestinian delegations to the talks during his two-day visit, as well as tour Israel's frontlines with Syria and Lebanon.

Earlier Monday, Mr. Christopher

became the first senior U.S. official to visit Beirut in a decade Monday, flying by helicopter to suburban Varze on the residential leg of his Middle East tour.

Mr. Christopher met with Lebanese leaders under immense security during his two-hour stop at the Lebanese Defense Ministry. He then helicopter back to Larnaca, Cyprus, for a brief stopover before leaving for Israel.

Mr. Christopher said later Lebanon assured him it wanted the peace talks to resume soon.

Mr. Christopher held talks with President Elias Hrawi, Prime Minister Rafik Al Hariri and Foreign Minister Bouez at the heavily-guarded Defense Ministry on the eastern edge of Beirut.

"I have heard today from the Lebanese leaders ... that they agree like other leaders in this region ... that there should be an early return to the negotiations and parties should return to the table as soon as possible," he said.

Asked what he could have achieved during such brief talks in Lebanon, Mr. Christopher said: "A commitment from the Lebanese government to resume (peace) negotiations as soon as possible."

"Our consultations have given me a better sense of the road ahead," he said.

"But I think we have begun a process here which will enable us to work effectively together in the future provided the parties are prepared to come back to the negotiations and do

(Continued on page 5)

Exiles expect little from U.S.

MARJ AL ZOHOUR, Lebanon (Agencies) — Palestinian exiles expected little Monday from a visit to Lebanon by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher and said Arab states still stood by them.

Abdul Aziz Al Rantisi, the leader of the 396 Palestinians expelled by Israel and stranded for nine weeks in South Lebanon, rejected a proposal from Mr. Christopher that Israel should speed up judicial reviews of the evictees' cases.

"We prefer death over submitting any appeals to committees (in Israel)," said Dr. Rantisi, adding the Israeli review of their cases was an attempt to pretend the mass expulsion was legal.

"We have refused to appeal to any review committee and we

refuse the outcome of these committees," added Dr. Rantisi, a founding member of the Islamic Resistance Movement Hamas.

Mr. Christopher flew from Kuwait to Cyprus Monday and was taken by helicopter to Lebanon before continuing on to Israel — his last stop.

He is touring the region to revive Arab-Israeli peace talks stalled since Israel expelled the Palestinians on Dec. 17. He still has to solve the dispute caused by the evictees.

Lebanese officials said they would stress to Mr. Christopher the evictees were not a Lebanese responsibility so Israel must take them back.

"We are not waiting for his visit as if it is the most important thing or will lead to a solution to now on. This decision is final."

Shells land near exiles' tent camp

MARJ AL ZOHOUR, Lebanon (Agencies) — Artillery shells fired by Israeli or its militia ally crashed Monday near a camp housing about 400 Palestinians expelled by Israel. Military sources said no casualties were reported.

The shelling, which appeared to be aimed at suspected hideouts of resistance fighters, carried into a 10th day the latest wave of hostilities between Israel and Hezbollah.

The violence was overlapped with a tour of the Middle East by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, who is trying to revive the stalled Arab-Israeli peace talks.

Israeli troops and allied irregulars of the South Lebanon Army (SLA) militia are battling guerrillas of Hezbollah and other resistance groups in South Lebanon.

The shell blasts shook the evictees out of their late morning slumber on the first fasting day marking the beginning of the Holy Month of Ramadan.

Many rushed out of their tents, hair dishevelled, hastily pulling up their pants, to shout questions to reporters about what was happening around their camp in southeast Lebanon.

Smoke and dust billowed from a hill about 500 metres south of the camp. Lebanese army officers manning a checkpoint near the camp said the hill was hit by five round of Howitzers at 9 a.m.

No crisis' after sudden U.N. inspection in Iraq

BAGHDAD (Agencies) — U.N. weapons inspectors rummaged through three Iraqi military sites for hidden ballistic missiles in surprise searching Monday. It was not immediately known what they found, but a team leader said there was "no crisis."

An Iraqi official said the teams found nothing.

Chief inspector Nikita Smidovich said he would first report to the U.N. special commission about Monday's findings.

"You should not assume there is a crisis here. No crisis," Mr. Smidovich told reporters after returning to Baghdad's Sheraton Hotel.

The search followed reports that a 13-member ballistic missile team lead by Frenchman Patrice Palanque had come across evidence that Iraq was hiding ballistic missile facilities.

U.N. experts had said it was a major finding and had not ruled

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We have explained very clearly that there are very serious obstacles that we cannot overcome... we are not saying that these are preconditions. We are saying that these are obstacles that we cannot surmount," Dr. Ashrawi said.

The Palestinians planned to discuss the expulsions, accusations of Israeli human rights violations, the role of the United States in peace talks and its relationship with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), sources close to the Palestinian delegation said.

The sources said the delegates would still not expect Syria to resume negotiations until the issue of 400 Palestinians expelled by Israel is settled.

The report on the Golani in the daily *Yedioth Achronot* came hours before Mr. Christopher was to arrive to meet with Israeli and Palestinian leaders.

Hanan Ashrawi, spokeswoman for the Palestinian delegation, told Israel Radio she would be surprised if Damascus agrees to pull back in the Golani Heights, an Israeli daily reported Monday.

Israel has agreed to return 101 of the men immediately and the

(Continued on page 5)

Fighting kills 7 in S. Somalia; aid worker shot dead

MOGADISHU (AP) — Fighting between rival factions killed seven Somalis and wounded 21 in the southern port of Kismayu Monday, and gunmen killed an Irish nurse in a roadside ambush near Mogadishu, military officials said.

The Kismayu fighting was the most serious in Somalia in weeks and came a day before U.S. forces in the area were to start heading home. A ceremony scheduled for Tuesday to turn over control of the security operation in Kismayu to Belgian forces was postponed.

"It was a specific task to check several sites. To check certain information ... in these locations there might be items prohibited by law," Mr. Smidovich told reporters at the end of his inspection.

He was referring to Security

(Continued on page 5)

U.N. report estimates aid need at \$250 million. page 2

Pieces seem to fall into places as Christopher pursues Mideast mission

By Ayman Al Safadi
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Despite the low expectations with which he started his Middle East tour, U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher seems to have succeeded in achieving progress in his mission to put the stalled Arab-Israeli peace talks back on track.

While none of the countries Mr. Christopher since Thursday visited has publicly announced its agreement to the resumption of the talks, all have indicated willingness to return to the negotiating table as soon as possible.

In Jordan, His Majesty King Hussein warned against any "substantial delay" in the talks, while Syrian officials said Damascus would work together with the United States to resume the talks in "a convenient and admirable atmosphere." Egypt pledged to help

restart the talks, suspended since Dec. 17 when Israel expelled to South Lebanon about 400 Palestinians it claims are members of the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) and Islamic Jihad.

All Arab leaders who met with Mr. Christopher continue to consider the evictees' question an impediment to resuming the talks, but they seem willing to accept a compromise to the problem, even if it may fall short of a complete implementation of Security Council Resolution 799.

The PLO will die too, only slower, if it gives up the talks.

The risk in abandoning the peace process is immense for the PLO because this means virtually conceding defeat to Palestinian hardliners who opposed the negotiations from the very beginning. If that happens, though it is very unlikely, Israel would have delivered to the hardliners what they wanted for two years to achieve: The abortion of the peace process and eventually the lead-

ership of the Palestinian people.

Considering the U.S. decision to stick by the deal it struck with Israel on the evictees, the fate of Mr. Christopher's mission will largely depend on his talks with Israeli officials and Palestinian leaders when he starts his negotiations in Israel and the occupied territories Tuesday.

NEWS ANALYSIS

Mr. Christopher is reportedly going to push Israel into accelerating the review of individual cases of the expellees, probably working to get it to outline a timetable for a phased return of the exiles.

That could save face for the Palestinians and Israelis, prompting both to make a compromise to save the peace process. The chances that they will accept such a solution are high, considering the declared

interest the two parties have in keeping the peace process rolling, and what both see as the nightmare scenario that the failure of Mr. Christopher's mission will entail.

The PLO will have to accept such a compromise because it cannot afford to let the peace process slip away, nurturing the support of Hamas in the occupied territories through what will be perceived as the futility of peaceful negotiations to fulfil the aspirations of the Palestinian people. The PLO's support in the occupied territories will fade away as Hamas will claim a larger backing from the Palestinians.

This is something that neither Israel nor its Arab partners in the negotiations want to see happening.

Combine that with the negative impact an end to the peace process will have on Israel if it is believed to be responsible for it, and optimism for a

softening of the Israeli position on the evictees is in line.

Also, Mr. Christopher has something to offer to both parties in return for sending home successful in his first foreign policy test as secretary of state.

To the Arabs, his pledge to be more involved in the peace talks — a full partner though the term is yet to be better clarified — will be encouraging on the grounds that it might entail U.S. pressure on Israel during what has thus been a dead end negotiations. An Arab wish would be met.

By getting Israel out of the corner on the evictee issue, Mr. Christopher would have helped Israel out of its crisis without having to face more U.S. action, with the U.S. not heading Arab demands to exercise pressure on Israel. That would be a push that the Rabin government would welcome and present to the Israeli public. His visit would eventually be declared a success.

Hundreds of thousands at risk in Sudan famine

By Paul Eddle
Reuter

KHARTOUM — Hundreds of thousands of people across vast areas of southern Sudan are at risk from famine because of civil war, tribal fighting and the disintegration of the main southern rebel movement.

Relief agencies have been able to resume flights to many towns but cannot reach many people in the bush. The agencies are restricted by lack of money and fear a new government offensive against the rebels could drive yet more people from their land.

Aid workers say the worst-hit region is Upper Nile province, where a split in the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Party (SPLA) has triggered three bouts of fighting between the Nuer and Dinka tribes since the end of 1991.

Gianina Maragliano, senior adviser at the U.N.'s World Food Programme (WFP), said aid workers who had visited the town of Kongor, 1,000 kilometres south of Khartoum, had found starvation as serious as in the much more widely

publicised crisis in Somalia. "You see really skeletons not even strong enough to discharge the food that came in the plane," he said.

Relief agencies estimate there are 145,000 people in the area around Kongor and two other towns, BOR and DUR, who have been displaced from their homes by the tribal fighting and are in extremely poor condition.

Assessment teams which have visited the area found no children under the age of five and judged that mortality rates were high.

Another 100,000 people, mostly from the cattle-herding Dinka, have been pushed southwards 350 kilometres or more to areas along the Kenyan border.

Aid workers say problems in Upper Nile have been made worse because the faction of the SPLA which dominated the area, the Nuer-led Nasir group, has begun to disintegrate.

They believe there is a danger the region could collapse into anarchy as individual commanders establish themselves as local warlords — such as in

Somalia, where the United States sent 24,000 troops in December to ensure food reached the starving.

On Jan. 17, a Nasir faction commander attacked a convoy of barges carrying United Nations food aid up the Nile, the first river shipment for several years, and looted 1,300 tonnes of grain — more than half the cargo.

The SPLA, at least the Nasir faction, seems to be falling apart to such an extent that even the government is worried by the vacuum," one relief official said. "People are in a desperate situation because any kind of structure has fallen apart."

A second area of critical concern is Bahir Al Ghazal province, where relief agencies estimate 203,000 people in the countryside around the town of Wau Rog, 850 kilometres southwest of Khartoum, are surviving by gathering wild foods.

They have received no relief aid since 1990.

The government recaptured several towns in the area in an offensive last year against John Garang's Dinka-dominated

faction of the SPLA.

Aid workers have been able to reach some of the towns in the last few weeks, including Rumbek and Yiro, but found them almost totally empty of civilians and could not assess conditions in the surrounding bush, which is still controlled by Colonel Garang.

An assessment team which visited Parayang, some way to the east, found many of the 25,000 people there infected with a killer disease, Kala-Azar, spread by parasite-infected sandflies.

"Another fear is that this is the area where they (the government) are going to start an offensive very soon and that is going to produce a lot of suffering," a relief workers said.

He said the U.N. agencies were considering air-dropping food in areas where planes could not land. A regular pattern of aid flights to the region might also deter an offensive.

The third area worrying relief officials is the least accessible: The Nuba mountains west of Khartoum.

"Now that the government is living up to what we always requested, it is up to the international community to do its part," Mr. Maragliano said.



Actor Charlton Heston puts on a bullet-proof vest as he starts a tour of Mogadishu harbour (AP photo)

U.N. report estimates aid for Somalia in 1993 at \$250 million

MOGADISHU (AP) — A U.N. mission will seek more than \$250 million this year to fight famine in Somalia and start rebuilding a country shattered by civil war.

A draft report obtained by the Associated Press.

The report includes proposed United Nations projects to restore water systems, schools, agriculture and health care. The plan hinges on allied forces continuing to maintain security in the lawless

country.

The report, given Saturday to U.N. officials for final review, is to be presented at a donors' conference March 11 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. An aid package could provide a boost to peace talks between rival factions scheduled there four days later.

"Somalia as a nation and society lies in ruins," says the report,

which estimates up to 500,000 people, died last year of starvation or famine-related diseases during clan related warfare.

"Today, an estimated 1.5 million Somalis remain at great risk and up to three times that number need some form of assistance," the report says.

The draft report also said em-

ployment and farming program would each cost \$20 million and education \$7.6 million.

It calls for the beginning of a repatriation programme for 200,000 Somali refugees in

Ethiopia and Djibouti.

"Further funds should be earmarked by donors for disbursement in the course of the year," says the report titled "Relief and Rehabilitation Programmatic for Somalia."

The report, which noted earlier U.N. development efforts in Somalia fell short of their goals, was criticised by some relief officials as being too hasty and overly ambitious.

But U.N. Officials say the country's enormous needs must be met without delay.

"We could go on forever, but donors are anxious to know what we want," said Pat Banks, a U.N. coordinator who drafted the report. "There's a lot more that needs to be done. These are only projects we can begin immediately."

U.N. spokesman Farouk Mawlawi said he expected some changes in the proposal.

"Some projects may be found impractical," he said.

"Let's hope we can do half of what they say. It's the first time

I've seen a document as ambitious as that," said an official of a private relief organisation who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Clan fighting in Somalia followed the ouster of dictator Mohammad Siad Barre in January 1991. Last December, the U.S.-led forces of Operation Restore Hope halted clan fighting in southern Somalia and escorted relief shipments to famine-devastated areas.

The draft report says the success of the 1993 programme "will be largely dependent on three major factors: Security, the Somalis themselves and the response of the international community."

U.S.-led forces numbering about 33,000 personnel, including some 17,000 from the United States, are ensuring security in Somalia. A U.N.-led force of about 20,000 to 25,000 troops, with about 5,000 Americans, is to assume responsibility under a mandate the U.N. Security Council is to consider this week.

Coalition forces Sunday blew up one of the largest stockpiles of arms gathered during various weapons sweeps. In three separate blasts they destroyed more than 20,000 mortar shells, said U.S. military spokesman Colonel Fred Peck.

Israel delays expulsion of Messianic Jews

TEL AVIV (AP) — Israel has temporarily extended residency permits of three families from the United States and South Africa ordered out because they were Messianic Jews, officials said Monday.

The interior ministry agreed to a two-week extension at the request of three Israeli legislators who said they were trying to amend the law of entry, which would solve the problem for some Messianic Jews, a ministry statement said.

Earlier this month, the three families had been told to leave Israel by Sunday, Feb. 21, after the supreme court rejected their request to be given citizenship as Jews. The court ruled that since they believed Jesus was the Messiah, they were no longer Jews but Christians.

KUWAIT, Philippines agree on maids crisis

KUWAIT (R) — Kuwait and the Philippines have agreed joint measures to curb abuse of Filipina maids by Kuwaiti employers, a Philippines diplomat said Monday.

Consul-General Wenceslao Quirologico said Kuwait had also pledged to help the repatriation in Manila of 300 Filipino domestic servants who have taken refuge at the Philippine embassy complaining of abuse by employers.

He told Reuters a "joint mechanism" in tackle servant abuse had been agreed by Philippines Labour Minister Nieves Conferor and Interim Minister Sheikh Ahmad H. Al Sabah during a visit by Ms. Conferor ending Sunday.

Kuwait had undertaken to act on their side of the programme

within the next two weeks in an agreement reached amicably in which both sides had shown determination in tackling the issue, he added.

Hundreds of servants from the Philippines and the Indian sub-continent have complained in recent years of being beaten, raped or denied pay by Kuwaiti employers.

Kuwaiti officials say the reports of assault are either fabricated or exaggerated by a minority of women who want to get out of contracts and go home. They say much of the blame lies with recruiting agencies.

Agents in Kuwait and Asia recruit the maids, unusually by colour photographs or video tapes, many would be servants are university graduates.

They sometimes hand over

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

Mubarak against any revision of new law

CAIRO (R) — Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak said a new law which will stop Muslim fundamentalists controlling professional associations will not be repealed or revised, newspapers reported Monday. Lawyers and engineers went on strike Sunday in protest at the law, which makes elections to syndicate councils invalid unless 50 per cent of members vote. In several cases, fundamentalists have won control on very low turnouts. The newspapers quoted Mr. Mubarak as telling armed forces officers in Aswan on Sunday: "I declare there will be no repeat and no revision of a law which was issued in the public interest." He said it was "not reasonable that a small, organised group should try to impose its control on the majority and create an atmosphere which drives the majority to abstain from taking part in expressing its opinion." The opposition argues that the turnout for elections at all levels in Egypt, including parliament, is very low because so few Egyptians believe elections are fair. The new law also bars professional associations from collecting and distributing money for purposes not directly relating to their main function. After an earthquake in Cairo in October, the associations and other groups dominated by fundamentalists angered the government by competing with the state in relief work.

Mubarak to take Bosnian war wounded

ALGIERS (R) — Algeria will take in 60 war wounded from Bosnia for hospital treatment, the official news agency APS reported Monday. The group was due to arrive later Monday aboard an Algerian airliner from Split. They will be treated at Algerian hospitals during the Holy Month of Ramadan. Algeria has set up a solidarity committee, composed of representatives of the government and humanitarian groups, for victims of the fighting in the former Yugoslavia. The committee has collected funds to finance a relief programme in favour of Muslims in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Boxing champ Bowe visits Somalia

MOGADISHU (R) — World heavyweight boxing champion Rickie Bowe put on a bullet-proof vest and stepped into one of the world's toughest arenas Monday to bring what he hoped would be inspiration to the people of Somalia. Mr. Bowe was on a one-day goodwill visit to raise funds for the famine-hit country and tour charity projects. "I want to give them inspiration and make them feel better to rebuild their nation," the boxer told reporters. "I hope others from around the world do the same." He brought with him 10,000 tonnes of medicine, a donation from a U.S. charity, on a cargo plane he chartered from the Kenyan capital Nairobi. At Mogadishu Airport, Mr. Bowe was quickly told to don a bullet-proof vest and helmet as a seven-vehicle military convoy whisked him through the streets of Mogadishu, troubled by snipers almost daily. Mr. Bowe said he was carmarking proceeds from a possible title defence in June — against Evander Holyfield, whom he de-throned last November — for Somalia, where more than 200,000 people have died from a civil war-induced famine since 1991. Asked how much this would be, Mr. Bowe said: "It varies at this point, but we will work something out."

Demjanjuk to start hunger-strike next week

TEL AVIV (AP) — John Demjanjuk, convicted in Israel as the Nazi guard "Ivan the terrible," will start a hunger strike next week to protest a delay in a ruling on his appeal, his attorney's office said Monday. Demjanjuk, 72, will stop eating on March 1 to demand Israel's supreme court issue its ruling, said a statement from attorney Yoram Shetef's office. The five-judge panel wound up the hearings on the appeal in June 1992. Justice ministry spokeswoman Etty Eshad said earlier this month that she could not predict when the court would rule. A former Ohio auto worker, Demjanjuk was extradited from the United States in 1986 and convicted in April 1989. He was sentenced to death. He was identified as being Ivan, a gas chamber operator at the Treblinka camp in Nazi-occupied Poland. The Ukrainian-born Demjanjuk says he is a victim of mistaken identity. He says he was captured by the Germans in May 1942 while serving in the Soviet army and spent the time in question as a prisoner of war.

Polish-born Lau wins Israel chief rabbi

The chief rabbi of Israel got two contenders Sunday night, the dirtiest in Israeli history, with accusations of womanizing, bribery and electronic snooping.

A 150-member conclave of religious and lay leaders met and elected Yaakov Lau and Eliyahu Bakshi Doron as chief rabbis of the European-descended Ashkenazi and Middle East-descended Sephardi communities of Israel.

They succeeded rabbis Avraham Shapira and Mordechai Eliyahu, whose 10-year terms expire next month, and they face a huge task in rescuing the tarnished stature of their office.

With the creation of the Israeli state, the rabbinate lost some of its powers, but continues to affect daily life through its control of Jewish marriage and kosher (dietary) laws.

The mudslinging stemmed partly from the openness of the latest election. The National Religious Party, which used to control the chief rabbinate, is out of government, and the election consequently became a free for

all.

Lau, 56, is a scion of a centuries-old family of rabbis, and he is popular among secular Israelis, who often feel that the rabbinate imposes its rules on their lifestyle.

His book on modernism and Jewish ritual is widely read, and as chief rabbi of Tel Aviv, he often officiates at celebrity weddings.

Jerusalem-born Bakshi-Boron, 52, typifies the power of the ultra-religious Haredi community, and its growing willingness to overcome religious objections to Jewish statehood and become part of the Israeli establishment.

Bakshi-Boron's victory represents a further victory for his backer, Shas, the Haredi party in the governing coalition.

Both rabbis pledged in their victory speeches to try to bridge gaps between secular and religious Jews.

"We have to roll up our sleeves and make a big effort, ... to open our arms and hearts and absorb everyone, because there exists no Jew without a spark of faith in his heart," said Lau.

"We know our job today is to build brotherly love and bring the people close to the Torah, to love them and be loved, for the sake of God," Bakshi-Boron said.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

Dr. Yousef Abu Saad 989000
Khalilch pharmacy 985417
Central Amman Telephone Repair 623101
Aldabi Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 615615
Electric Power Company 636381
RJ Flight Information 06-53200
Qatara Air Int'l. Airport 06-53200
Central Amman Telephone Repair 623101
Aldabi Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 615615
Electric Power Company 636381
RJ Flight Information 06-53200
Qatara Air Int'l. Airport 06-53200
Central Amman Telephone Repair 623101
Aldabi Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100
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Aldabi Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111



His Majesty King Hussein with His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah and his fiance Miss Rania Faisal Al Yassin at Sunday's engagement ceremony (Photo by Mekdes)

Royal bride-to-be prepares for a new life

AMMAN (I.T.) — Miss Rania Faisal Al Yassin who was engaged to His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah Sunday, was quoted as saying in an interview Monday that no date was set for the wedding but that the ceremony would not take place for several months.

The Yassin family, originally

from Tulkarem in the Israeli occupied West Bank, were settled in Kuwait where Faisal Al Yassin, the bride-to-be's father worked as a doctor. The family were forced to leave and come to Jordan in the wake of the Iraqi invasion of the emirate in August 1990.

King receives new envoys

AMMAN (Petra) — Three Jordanian ambassadors were sworn in before His Majesty King Hussein at the Royal Court Monday.

The ambassadors were Jordan's Ambassador to the Russian Federation Khalid Al Taher, Jordan's Ambassador to Chile Atef Halasa, and Jordan's Ambassador to Brazil Azmi Mirza.

Also four new ambassador's to Jordan Monday presented their credentials to King Hussein.

The ambassadors were Norwegian Ambassador Per Thelin Haugard, Austrian Ambassa-

dor Michael Stiglauer, Qatari Ambassador Nasser Abdul Aziz Al Nasser and Russian Ambassador Alexander Vladimirovitch Saltanov. On the occasion of the start of the Holy Month of Ramadan, King Hussein Monday received cables of good wishes from Egyptian President Husni Mubarak and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat.

"Today Russia is a major player because the U.S. says it is — for no other reason," he told the audience which met him at the University of Jordan, at a meeting organised by the Centre for Strategic Studies.

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But the banners are cynically applied, said Mr. Abu Odeh. "I would compare the applica-

tion of the Western concept of human rights and democracy to the spreading of Western Christianity to the non-monolithic parts of Africa, South America and Asia in past centuries. The civilised West has come to spread goodness among the savages," said Mr. Abu Odeh mockingly.

Not opposed to the concepts of human rights and democracy, Mr. Abu Odeh said, "I am all for it — but there is a way to introduce these concepts and make them last instead of doing a superficial job."

By not providing the political and economic and educational basis for democracy and human rights to spread, many of those countries advocating such changes are just "unrealistic" in their political dealings with the international community.

"When we are in the U.N., we have to look at global issues and remember that we are one of many parts in the world," he said addressing concern about Jordan's role in particular.

The end of the cold war, said Mr. Abu Odeh, had changed the world "check's and balance system" to some degree. "The Third World had some advantages during the cold war; they could appeal to both sides for aid and help and have the benefit of accepting the 'higher bid'."

But with the collapse of the Soviet Union, the number of sides to appeal to had somehow been reduced to one bloc, "the North-Western" bloc, said the ambassador to the U.N.

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Chairman of the Board of Directors:
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MOHAMMAD AMAD

Editor-in-Chief:
GEORGE S. HAWATMEH

Editorial and advertising offices:
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University Road, P.O. Box 6710, Amman, Jordan.
Telephones: 667171/6, 670141-4
Telex: 21497 ALRAI JO
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Charity begins at home

THE HOLY month of Ramadan offers yet another annual opportunity to observe the spiritual demands of the occasion. There is obviously more to Ramadan than refraining from eating and drinking from sunrise to sunset. The deep religious values that are so clearly associated with this abstinence require each and every truly devout individual to reach out and reflect on the most effective and efficient way to help the poor and needy amongst us.

It so happens that due to economic problems that have faced the Kingdom, there are so many people who are poverty stricken. The deepening economic woes of many Jordanians have naturally driven some into despair and even crime. What is worse is the end result of this economic depression which culminated in dividing citizens into privileged and underprivileged classes. The political and social ramifications of the widening gap between the haves and the have-nots in our society are abundant and clear to whoever seeks to be he.

There is a body of jurisprudence in Islam that calls for real social security according to which the basic needs of the society will have to be met. That could mean heavier taxation on the rich in order to guarantee minimum income to the majority of the people. It also means generating more employment opportunities by initiating industries that are employment intensive even if that entails higher production costs. The International Labour Office (ILO) had counselled developing countries as far back as the mid-seventies to think more in terms of creating business opportunities geared to satisfy the basic needs of their own respective societies than to enhance their export markets. The price of neglecting such an early message may have saved production costs for states which did not heed it, but their course caused them tremendous social and political upheavals that in the end outweighed the economic costs.

Theologians remind us that among the inner meanings of fasting in Ramadan is to remind observing Muslims about the hunger and deprivation of the less fortunate. If Jordanians can just look around for the widening pockets of deprivation in their own backyards, they would have fulfilled one of the basic religious values of Ramadan. Instead of turning daytime into nighttime and vice versa by reversing the order and timing of eating and sleeping, it would be infinitely better to try and be more faithful to the real religious and spiritual values of the holy occasion.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

WASHINGTON'S COMMITMENT to be a full partner in the Middle East peace process, as conveyed to the Arab leaders by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, is a very important development, said Al Ra'i Arabic daily Monday. But, said the paper, the Arabs still want to find out whether the U.S. administration intends to tamper with resolutions 242 and 338, on which the current peace process hinges, like it did with Resolution 799. It is reasonable to ask the U.S. secretary to give Washington's explicit stand vis-a-vis the two resolutions in the light of Washington's recent attitude towards Resolution 799 which has not been implemented, said the paper. The Arabs want Mr. Christopher to give them assurances that resolutions 242 and 338 will be implemented in full on the basis of exchanging land for peace, now that he has heard the Arab leaders' views and learnt that the Arab Nation is oriented towards a genuine and lasting peace, the paper demanded. It said that to play the role of full partner, the U.S. should declare openly its total commitment to dealing with the Middle East issue fairly and justly and to avoid any attempt to reach a compromise solution at the expense of the Arab rights and interests. The paper said the Arabs are totally committed to reach peace and Mr. Christopher has learnt this view in his talks in Cairo, Amman and Damascus; the Arabs, said the paper, are now expecting a commitment from Washington to adopt a single criteria or not a double standard policy in tackling the Arab-Israeli conflict.

In the view of Sawt Al Shaab daily, Mr. Christopher has already succeeded in fragmenting and diluting U.N. Security Council Resolution 799 which calls for the repatriation of Palestinians expelled to southern Lebanon. The paper said now that the Arab countries involved in the peace negotiations have accepted the idea of resuming the talks with Israel before any settlement to the expellees' problem has been reached, the Arab countries' stand has weakened. His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan has warned more than once against any separate deals which Israel could reach any Arab country under pressure from the United States but, regrettably, one can say only that Mr. Christopher has now succeeded in fragmenting and dividing the Arab stand to reach that point. Jordan has repeatedly stressed that the expellees' issue was standing in the way of peace and the resumption of the peace process, and everyone was in agreement that the U.S.-Israel compromise solution offered to the Arabs over 799 constituted a circumvention of that resolution, the paper noted.

The View from Fourth Circle

From distortion to dignity — the quest for Arab identity

I would like to respond to the thoughtful letter to the editor of Mr. Ayman Yasin two weeks ago, asking for clarification about my use of the phrase "the natural Arab/Islamic identity" in a previous column. I believe the quest for our natural national identity is today the most important and most widespread challenge being faced by the Arab people. More than any other single factor — more than oil, foreign armies or our own fears — the affirmation of our national identity will determine the long-term future of this region.

Our Arab/Islamic identity is not a unique or fixed concept that we can study and retrieve; it is, like all identities, a dynamic and fluid concept, changing with the times and adapting to the particularities of each generation. In our case, however, we can draw on an extraordinary long history of human civilisation from which we should be able to identify certain principles and concepts that pertained during our many moments of historical viability and rational nationhood, and our several moments of world-renowned productivity, ingenuity, and even some glory.

The reason I say we are searching for our authentic, natural identity is that we are in the midst of a period of intense national confusion and distortion. The political and national configuration that we have experienced since the post-1920, post-colonial era is both unnatural and unstable, if measured against the dominant principles that have defined our region and our culture for the last several thousand years.

The modern Arab states of our era are some of the most artificial, militaristic, turbulent, violent, dependent, indebted and demographically and economically distorted entities to see the light of day in this ancient land since the days of the crusader kingdoms, and of the Roman federated mini-kingdoms before them. Most of them have been and continue to be characterised by a deadly concentration of financial and military power in the hands of small numbers of people who comprise ruling elites — almost always self-imposed elites who were neither chosen by their people nor are accountable to them.

This century's Arab order of over 20 independent Arab states was not chosen by the Arab people themselves, and for the most part it has not satisfied their political rights, human needs or national aspirations. Our modern development reflects political configurations and socio-economic trends that are grossly in contradiction with the prevalent patterns of our vast and rich history — patterns that naturally defined our political structures and social/national identity.

Specifically, the dominant trends in the past, especially in our glory days, have almost always included the following: a loose and

distant role for the central government of the highest political authority, with little or no interference in people's daily lives; fiscal responsibility which, with few exceptions, saw the people of the region consume only what they produced, without falling into severe debt; local responsibility for routine daily matters such as education, health, employment, and security; religious and cultural pluralism, largely free of fanaticism and extremism; justice, tolerance, and equity based on community-level interpretation of Islamic doctrine; free movement of people, resources, ideas, and cultural impulses across the entire Middle East, unhindered by artificial political barriers and bureaucratic obstacles; political identity defined broadly (Arabs, Muslims, subjects of the Umayyad, Fatimid, or Ottoman empires), rather than narrowly (Lebanese, Tunisians, Jordanians, or Palestinians); a largely rural population that provided the life-sustaining agricultural base for the few city dwellers; and general self-sufficiency in food and other basic needs, combined with an active regional trading system.

Most of these concepts characterised our societies during the last several millennia, especially since the start of the Islamic era. But most of them no longer pertain in most communities in the Middle East today and, therefore, most people are actively engaged in one of several activities: Islamic politics that challenge the ruling orders of our many Arab states, an enthusiastic desire to emigrate at any cost, frantic scramble to secure a sufficient income at any political or moral cost, or, for those who have enjoyed welding power in recent decades, a brisk dash to accumulate large amounts of money and to hold on to that power under the guise of new orders and new political structures.

We endure a very difficult situation in the Arab World today, with mass discontent at the individual, family and community level. The natural or traditional Arab/Islamic identity of our region has been shattered, or badly disfigured, by our modern legacy of materialism, consumerism, urbanism, debt, dependence, centralised autocracy, exaggerated militarism, and other factors. Some of these problems are due to foreign colonial domination and Zionist penetration, while others are purely our own responsibility, reflecting our own lassitude, incompetence, greed, fear, patriarchy and violence.

In response to this grim reality, the people of the Arab World are looking for something better, for something that provides them with dignity instead of distortion and distress. They seek a more authentic and comfortable national configuration that makes greater sense to their social instincts and predominantly Islamic religious sentiments, and that provides some chance of

viability and survival on the basis of the existing regional resource base. This search for a new Arab/Islamic/Semitic/Middle Eastern political identity and national configuration has been going on since the turn of the century, when the Ottoman-era patterns of life and rule were brought to an end by World War I.

Islam and Arabism have been the two most powerful political expressions of this quest for identity during the last seven decades; colonialism, Zionism, fragmentation, militarism, and home-grown Arab autocracy have been its main deterrents and constraints. Now, as some Arab people start to develop more pluralistic and democratic systems, and some Arab people start to enjoy the opportunity to express their political desires and sentiments in freedom for the first time in many, many centuries, the natural political identity of this region will slowly assert itself.

We cannot predict what it will be, but we can be sure that it will reflect social attributes and cultural patterns that are indigenous to our societies. For example, our identity will be based more on collective (tribal) principles of security than on individualism. We will have more intra-regional contacts and sentiments than we have had in recent decades, and these will be based on the vitality of indigenous factors such as Arabism, Islam, and the pressing need for resource integration.

Our political structures will also be based on a new synthesis that brings together the most fundamental indigenous Arab/Islamic social concepts (justice and equity, collective security, tribalism, patriarchy, ethnic and religious pluralism, and shura, or consultation) with some relevant western and international political concepts (human rights legislation, due process of law, an independent judiciary, direct elections for popular representation through parliament, formal separation of power among government branches, and accountability of public officials through a formal parliamentary process).

In general, we will have to reduce or reverse some of the devastating trends that have ravaged our region, our economies; our social structures and our collective identity since the 1920s; we will have to reach deep into our heritage for a new political and national identity that corresponds more closely to our authentic needs, wishes, and attributes. In the modern era, the average Arab person has not had the opportunity to express his or her wishes, needs or identity. Now, a new opportunity to do so may be emerging, and in time it will lead to the affirmation of our natural Arab/Islamic identity.

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Christopher's visit could show direction of peace talks

The following article is reprinted from the Feb. 20, 1993 issue of the Economist.

In the week's sweep through the Middle East, which started in Cairo on Feb. 18, and ends in Israel, Warren Christopher is to see whether the Arab-Israeli peace talks can be restarted. America's secretary of state will find Arab government failing over themselves to oblige. They may suspect the pro-Israeli sympathies of the new Clinton administration, dislike the American-Israeli horse-trading over the Palestinians deported from Israel, and bemoan the United Nations' response. But all want to start on the right foot with Bill Clinton.

For the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), and for the Palestinians living in the occupied territories, things are not so simple. This week the PLO reiterated that, regardless of what the Arab governments do, the Palestinian delegation will stay away from the negotiating table until Israel complies with U.N. Security Council Resolution 799, which demands the immediate return of all the recent deportees. Yitzhak Rabin, Israel's prime minister, is standing firm on the deal made with the Americans:

Ever since the launch of the peace process in Madrid in October 1991, Hamas has led a coalition of ten groups (most of them nationalist rather than Islamic) in outright opposition to the negotiations. That Hamas has soared in popularity to become the second force, after Fatah, in the occupied territories derives from many Palestinians' belief that the

100 deportees to return at once, and the other 300 before the end of the year. He is dismissive of the fact that the Palestinians have turned this down; his attention is now fixed on the possibility of a deal with Syria.

When he deported the Islamists

Palestinians in December, all of them political rather than military figures and including 30 top-ranking leaders of Hamas and ten from the smaller Islamic Jihad. Mr. Rabin claimed that this might help the PLO in the peace process. On the contrary, the expulsions not only checked the peace talks but also the feeding between Hamas and Fatah (the driving force of the PLO), as Fatah was forced to the defence of its Islamic brethren. Yet, only a month before the deportations, Yasser Arafat was publicly likening Hamas to the lokata movement in South Africa.

Ever since the launch of the peace process in Madrid in October 1991, Hamas has led a coalition of ten groups (most of them nationalist rather than Islamic) in outright opposition to the negotiations. That Hamas has soared in popularity to become the second force, after Fatah, in the occupied territories derives from many Palestinians' belief that the

PLO-led delegation, they feel, has been engaged in negotiations for an autonomy that would offer the Palestinians little more than the right to collect their own rubbish.

The enthusiasm at the time of Madrid was real. Palestinians deeply want peace and a semblance of normality. But there is a line beneath which they feel a settlement is not worth having. Had Mr. Rabin translated into deeds the encouraging words he uttered when he first took office, support for Hamas on the Palestinian street would have declined, at least to its pre-Madrid level (when Hamas was estimated to have a following of around 30-40 per cent in the Gaza Strip and 20-25 per cent in the West Bank). Gaza, poor, devout and with a largely refugee population, has proved an ideal breeding-ground for religious fervour. Hamas evolved from the Muslim Brotherhood, which flourished in parts of the occupied territory in the 1970s, creating a wide welfare network. It was encouraged by Israel as an unrebellious counter to the PLO. Its stated aim was to return society to the true path of Islam, from which it had been deflected by the secularism of the

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Christopher voices hopes for talks

(Continued from page 1)

position." Mr. Christopher added. "Palestinian negotiators he will meet ... occupied Jerusalem say they will not return to the talks until all the specific issues are resolved."

Mr. Christopher registered support for Lebanon's independence and said that the United States desires the withdrawal of all non-Lebanese forces.

This would presumably include the 10,000 Syrian troops, plus 1,000 Israeli soldiers in the Jewish state's self-styled "security zone" in the south.

Grey and red dust shrouded the three US Black Hawk choppers as they touched down at the sprawling base camp at 5:05 p.m. (1505 GMT) during a 6-hour flight over the East Mediterranean.

U.S. Ambassador Ryan Crocker's machine-gunned, bullet-proof Chevrolet Silverado whisked Mr. Christopher and Assistant Secretary of State for Middle Eastern Affairs Edward Djerejian across the 700-meter distance to the conference hall.

Mr. Soueif greeted Mr. Christopher at the door and escorted him to meet President Hrawi and Prime Minister Hariri.

Mr. Hariri called the visit "testimony that Lebanon's stability and its recovery from the civil war are a must for us in the region."

The first Lebanese leaders had raced down heavily walled streets to Yarre minutes before Mr. Christopher's arrival.

Military sources said all cars parked inside and within a five-kilometer radius around the walled hilltop ministry were removed before Mr. Christopher's arrival. They said the move was a "precaution against a car bombing."

Army intelligence officers and commandos units surrounded the hilltop. Hundreds of other soldiers were confined in offices or barracks within the compound.

The Lebanese refused to meet with Mr. Christopher except on their own soil, contending his presence would amount to U.S. recognition of Lebanon's recovery from the anarchy of hostage-taking, aircraft hijacking and suicide bombing that highlighted the civil war from 1975 to 1990.

They hoped to persuade Mr. Christopher to lift a travel ban to Lebanon the United States imposed after the 1985 hijacking of a TWA jetliner to Beirut. The hijackers shot and killed a U.S. navy diver and held the passengers hostage 17 days.

Mr. Christopher declined to promise the ban would be lifted, saying, "that's a question we'll be studying."

In Nicosia, Mr. Christopher told Greek-Cypriot leaders he hoped for an early settlement to end the 18-year division of their island.

He held talks with outgoing President George Vassopoulos and his successor Glafcos Clerides at Larnaca airport during the brief stop-over on his way to Israel from Lebanon.

Asked whether the Clinton administration would stand by its election

pledge to push for the withdrawal of Turkish troops occupying the northern third of Cyprus, Mr. Christopher said:

"We certainly hope for an early settlement of that long-standing controversy ... I hope it is now time for a full settlement ... with the leadership we have in this room."

Mr. Clerides will be sworn in on Sunday as the fourth elected president of Cyprus.

In Saudi Arabia, Mr. Christopher sought the kingdom's support to get the peace talks resumed and assured King Fahd of continued American backing, reports said.

"We want the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to help us ensure an early resumption of the negotiations, and take further steps for a long peace," Mr. Christopher told reporters on arrival in Riyadh.

Mr. Christopher added that the United States appreciated the part already played by Saudi Arabia in the peace process.

He also said President Clinton was committed to the security of the Gulf and the United States shared Saudi Arabia's determination to ensure that Iraq complied with all United Nations Security Council resolutions.

Mr. Christopher said the United States had "nothing against the Iraqi people" who were suffering as a result of the U.N. resolutions.

"But we cannot but see all the Security Council resolutions implemented," he said.

Mr. Christopher held talks with King Fahd Sunday evening.

He said his visit to Saudi Arabia was a confirmation of the close ties between Saudi Arabia and the United States and looked forward to the opportunity to strengthen them further.

In Kuwait, Mr. Christopher reiterated the tough line against Iraq.

Mr. Christopher's two-hour visit to Kuwait intended to assure nervous U.S. allies in the Gulf of Mr. Clinton's commitment to their security.

In return, he was interested in obtaining their support to renew the Arab-Israeli peace talks as soon as possible, U.S. officials said.

"Our friends can rest assured that the United States will be with them in the future as in the past," Mr. Christopher said on arrival in Kuwait.

He was met by Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmad Al Jaber Al Sabah. Later he held a meeting with the emir, Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah.

"As long as the people of this region are subject to aggression, our friends can rely on the steadfast vigilance of the United States," Mr. Christopher said.

In his arrival statement, Mr. Christopher noted that almost exactly two years ago to the day, U.S. troops stormed into Kuwait City at the climax of the Gulf war, ending a six-month Iraqi occupation of the emirate.

Christopher to seek Golan timetable

(Continued from page 1)

agreement to renew the peace talks while in Israel this week.

Mr. Peres did not specify a date for resuming the negotiations.

Mr. Christopher said in Syria Sunday he was optimistic about resuming the talks in Washington. U.S. officials have targeted March or April.

Yet it was unclear how Mr. Christopher would bridge the gap between Israelis and Palestinians during a series of meetings in occupied Jerusalem on Tuesday and Wednesday before leaving the region on Thursday.

"I think there will be an understanding when the talks will resume, and I hope this has a chance," Mr. Peres told Israel Radio hours before Mr. Christopher's scheduled arrival.

"I don't know if there will be a detailed schedule it takes time," Mr. Peres said.

Fighting kills 7 in south Somalia

(Continued from page 1)

Marine Colonel Fred Peck, the U.S. military spokesman, said the fighting began before dawn and ended Monday morning, killing seven Somalis and wounding 21. He said U.S. and Belgian troops in the area were not involved in the conflict, which lasted five hours.

Col. Peck said an overnight curfew would be imposed, and that the troops' departure would probably be delayed only a day or two.

Valerie Place, 23, a nurse for the Irish relief agency Concern, was shot to death in an attack on her vehicle outside Afgoi, about 90 kilometers north of Mogadishu.

No crisis in Iraq after inspection

(Continued from page 1)

council Resolution 687, the Gulf of ceasing document under which Iraq must dismantle its biological, chemical, nuclear and ballistic missile programme. It was the first time two U.N. inspectors had worked together in Iraq.

Insam Mohammad Amin, the official in charge of coordinating the movements of the inspectors, told reporters they visited three sites. They found nothing. This is great proof we are finding nothing."

The United Nations has said there is strong evidence Iraq is

Khomeini's legacy pits cynical rich against embittered poor

By Christopher Walker

TEHRAN — Many of the Iranians who mark the anniversary of the proclamation of the Islamic republic are aware that its viability is now more in question than at any time since Ayatollah Khomeini returned from exile in 1979.

Fourteen years after the Islamic revolution, Tehran remains a tale of two cities: its northern half housing the rich and often cynical, who fight a rear-guard action to save their values alive, while the overcrowded south is a sprawling slum dominated by the "dispossessed" in whose name the Shah was toppled.

Newcomers to the city, which has seen its population more than double since the 1986 census put it at six million, are invariably astonished to find the attractive, walled streets in the north packed with boutiques displaying risqué Parisian designs, showrooms for BMW cars and French bistros like Ghou, where men and single women make assignations across tightly packed tables.

Behind the thick curtains of villas, some with swimming pools and others with peacocks strutting the lawns, contraband alcohol flows like water (Johnny Walker Black Label sells for the equivalent of \$40), ladies outshine their western guests with plunging necklines, and illegal video machines are hand-delivered in brown paper parcels.

Some of the affluent are mullahs, who have profited from requisitioned businesses once in private hands; others are merchants thriving on fluctuating exchange rates that can make them 20 times wealthier on single deal. There are also "Islamic capitalists" whose money is being made on the stock exchange, which is bullish once again.

The squads of Islamic vigilantes, back in force in the streets, have failed to curb the affluent lifestyle of the upper classes. The supposedly forbidden quiffs worn by young women are more outrageously permed than ever. Men and women hold hands despite the threat of a flogging.

There are many such examples of what the radicals refer to angrily as "bad hijab"; breaches of the dress code which are adhered with uniformity in the south where the women all don black chadors, clasped to their necks with one hand for added modesty.

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Phoenix Suns' Charles Barkley drives for the basket to score for the west All-Stars

NBA West beats East in All-Star game

SALT LAKE CITY (R) — Karl Malone had 28 points and John Stockton 15 assists to lead the Western Conference to a 135-132 overtime victory against the Eastern Conference in the National Basketball Association's All-Star game Sunday.

Hometown heroes as members of the Utah Jazz, Malone and Stockton were named co-most valuable players, marking just the second time in All-Star history that the award was shared.

Elgin Baylor of Minnesota and Bob Pettit of St. Louis won the award in 1959.

Stockton had four points in overtime and Dan Majerle and Charles Barkley of the Phoenix Suns each sank key three-point baskets in the extra time.

Scottie Pippen sank two foul shots for the East as the players were leaving the court to bring his team to 132.

Majerle's three-pointer gave the West the lead for good at 124-123 and Barkley increased the West advantage to 131-125 with 1:28 left.

The East forced overtime on a 15-foot jumper by Patrick Ewing of the New York Knicks with eight seconds left in regulation. Ewing was wide open after taking a pass from Michael Jordan. Jordan finished with 30 points.

Tim Hardaway of the Golden State Warriors missed a foul-line jump shot in the final seconds that would have won the game for the West in regulation.

The All-Star game went to overtime for the fifth time and the first since 1987. The East leads the All-Time series, 27-16.

"It's great, especially winning the MVP (most valuable player) in front of our fans," Malone said. "We used the (Utah) Jazz plays in overtime and that's what won the game. This is a big thrill for me."

Winning coach, Paul Westphal, who regularly guides the Phoenix Suns, said: "The home team should win the All Star game... Barkley is mad at me because I took him out in the final minute in regulation for my best free throw shooters when they were fouling us."

SPORTS NEWS IN BRIEF

Bubka sets pole vault mark again

MOSCOW (AP) — Sergei Bubka broke the world indoor pole vault record for the second time in eight days, extending it one more centimeter to 6.15 metres (20 feet 2 inches) during a meet in his home city of Donetsk, Ukraine, the ITAR-TASS news agency reported. It was the 18th time he has broken the indoor mark and 34th time he has broken the event's record both indoor and outdoor. He raised the mark to 6.14 (20 1-3/4) in Lievin, France, on Feb. 20 at an international meet. Athletes from Holland, Italy, Russia, the United States, Ukraine, France and Kazakhstan took part in the meet in Donetsk.

Piggott to miss Hong Kong race

HONG KONG (R) — Legendary English jockey Lester Piggott, making a comeback from a serious accident, said Monday he will skip a Hong Kong race meeting Wednesday after cutting his eye. The 57-year-old, who is in Hong Kong on a one-month riding stint, told reporters he was injured Saturday when Beat Them Up gave him a glancing blow with its head. Piggott received three stitches and pulled out of Wednesday's evening meeting at Happy Valley as a precaution. Piggott, making a comeback from injury at the Breeders Cup meeting in the United States last November, was treated in the first aid room at the Sha Tin track.

Kenyan crosscountry star faces ban

NAIROBI (R) — Kenya's five-times world crosscountry champion John Ngugi faces a four-year ban by the International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF) for refusing a random dope test, a senior IAAF official said Monday. Ngugi, winner of the 1988 Olympics 5,000 metres, told reporters he had declined the test because the IAAF team of doctors who visited his rural home at Nyahururu, 300 km north of Nairobi, failed to identify themselves. John Weston, leader of the IAAF team of doctors, told reporters the Kenyan star declined a random test last week, and he was forwarding his report to the IAAF for action. "Under the rules Ngugi could be suspended for up to four years by the IAAF for declining the test," Weston said.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TANIAH HIRSCH
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HELD UP AGAIN

North-South vulnerable. South deals.

NORTH
♦ J 5 4 3
♥ K Q 10 9
♦ A 4 3 2
♦ 2

WEST
♦ A 6
♥ 8 7 6
♦ J 8 7
♦ Q 6 5
♦ Q J 10 9 8 ♦ 7 6 5

SOUTH
♦ E Q 2
♥ J 3 2
♦ K 10 9
♦ A K 4 3

The bidding:
South West North East
1 NT Pass 2 ♦ Pass
2 ♦ Pass 3 NT Pass
Pass Pass

Opening lead: Queen of ♣

Hold-up plays are a fascinating field that has not been explored deeply enough. We are indebted to Gary Fox of Napa, Calif., for this hand.

North-South reach a normal three-no-trump contract after a routine auction. When North's two club major-suit inquiry failed to un-

Kasparov warms up for Short

LINARES (R) — World chess champion Gary Kasparov warms up for his forthcoming title defense against Britain's Nigel Short in the strongest chess tournament ever held, starting in the Andalusian town of Linares this week.

Parings for the first round of the 11th Linares Grand Master Trophy will be announced at an opening ceremony.

It is expected to be Kasparov's only appearance in a major tournament before his world championship match against the week ranked 13th.

The 14-man lineup includes 11 of the world's top players, according to computer rankings known as ELO-ratings. Kasparov, 29, from Azerbaijan, tops the list with his record rating of 2,805.

The most notable absentee is Short, who despite his status as Kasparov's world title contender, has an ELO-rating of 2,655 that puts him outside the world's top 10.

Asked why he was not playing, Short said he didn't want to play in what was practically a championship of ex-Soviet players.

Kasparov is joined by his old sparring partner, Russian former world champion Anatoly Karpov, 41, ranked second at 2,725. Ukraine's Vassily Ivanchuk, 23 (2,710), is a fancied contender having won the 1991 Linares trophy ahead of Kasparov.

Sharing third place with Ivanchuk is Indian star Viswanathan Anand, 23, (2,710). He and fifth-ranked Belarusian Boris Gelfand, 24, (2,690) shared first place in the Moscow Grand Master Tournament last year.

Russian prodigy Vladimir Kramnik, at 17 (2,685) the world's second youngest grand master after the 16-year-old Hungarian Judit Polgar, tipped by Kasparov as a potential pretender to his title.

Another strong youngster is Latvian Alexei Shirov, 19, (2,670).

Significantly, in a sport known as a young man's game, only one of the top 10 — Karpov — is over 30.



Open Bredesen of Norway jubilates after winning the gold medal of the ski jumping special K115 of the Nordic World Ski Championships at Falun, Sweden (AFP photo)

Stich wins Eurocard Open

STUTTGART (AP) — Michael Stich beat Richard Krajicek 4-3, 7-5, 7-6 (7-4), 3-6, 7-5 to win the \$2.25 million Eurocard Open tennis tournament Sunday and earn one of the biggest purses on the ATP Tour.

The German collected \$355,000 for the match that lasted three hours and 46 minutes and ended on a controversial note.

The German also collected 414 points for his victory and will move into the top 10 ranks when the ATP Tour rankings come out.

"This is a step on the ladder. It's taking me where I want to be at the end of the year — in the top five," said Stich, the 1991 Wimbledon champion who began the week ranked 13th.

In December, Stich earned \$2 million by winning the Grand Slam Cup in Monich, an international tennis federation sanctioned event that is not part of the ATP tour.

The \$2.25 million Eurocard Open is the richest event on the year, except for the season ending ATP tour world championship in November.

"I would have been happy with much less money because I've been waiting for a victory for a long time," Stich said after capturing his seventh ATP tour title.

His last win on the tour before Sunday was in Inne in Rosmalen, the Netherlands.

"It's nice to win a tight match and to win here in Germany," Stich said.

The ninth-ranked Lendl is as running for a drop shot on the point of the ninth game when injury happened. After a touch rubbed liniment on Lendl's knee, he continued to play.

But Lendl obviously was over, barely dropping a ball over the net which Woodforde smacked into the open court.

Lendl tossed the ball to set again, but let the ball drop. Shaking his head no, Lendl walked to the net and shook Woodforde's hand.

Woodforde is the first unseeded player to win this tournament.

"I'm very disappointed it hap-



Michael Stich

pened again," said Lendl, in a statement released to the press. "I moved forward to the drop shot and I just felt it go."

The American, who won \$53,200, was just returning to the tour following a groin injury suffered in mid-November. His first tournament back was January's Australian Open where he lost in the first round.

Lendl will be examined at home in Greenwich, Connecticut, Monday to determine the seriousness of the injury. The last time the American withdrew from a final was in 1981.

"It's a pull on his left side right below the rib cage," trainer Bill Trissel said.

The victory for the 41st-ranked Woodforde, his fourth career title, earned him \$96,000. He did lose a set on his march to the title and defeated two seeds — number six Francisco Clavet in the first round and number three Michael Chang in the quarterfinals.

"I'll take it. I'm not bothered by it," said Woodforde, who added that it was unfortunate Lendl was injured. "I'm ecstatic! I still ended up the winner. I'm just happy. I'm over the moon."

Juventus eye Sauzee as Marseille go top

PARIS (R) — Reports that Juventus are interested in signing Franck Sauzee did not harm to the Marseille midfielder, who fired home a spectacular goal as his team went to the top of the French League at the weekend.

Juventus, having lost out to Inter Milan in the battle for Ajax Amsterdam's Dennis Bergkamp, were said to have turned their attention to the Marseille pair of Sauzee and Croatian striker Alen Boksic.

If the Italian club were watching Marseilles' 2-0 home win over Lens, they would not have been disappointed. Sauzee, whose sublime form has been behind his side's rise to the top with five wins in a row, played superbly and his goal was a gem.

The immediate consideration is Marseilles' visit to previous leaders Monaco Thursday. Monaco lost for the first time in 13 matches when they went down 1-0 in Nantes to an 18th minute goal by Croatian sweeper Zoran Vnje,

falling two points behind.

The goal was the first conceded by veteran keeper Jean-Luc Ettori in 10 games but he still broke the french record of keeping his net intact by six minutes, taking his mark to 896.

More alarming for Monaco was another listless performance from their shot-shy attack with Germany's Jürgen Klinsmann and company failing to score for the fourth game in a row.

Monaco dropped to third as Paris St. Germain also moved above them on goal differences despite a disappointing 0-0 home draw with Toulouse in which Liberian striker George Weah missed a penalty.

The Parisians blamed the Parc des Princes pitch with disintegrating alarmingly in recent games and has to be re-laid this week.

Barcelona fail to impress Cruyff

Barcelona and Atletico Madrid scraped badly needed wins in the Spanish Soccer League at the weekend but failed to impress

their coaches.

Barcelona won 1-0 at bottom club Real Burgos, while Atletico beat Cadiz 2-0.

Barcelona's Johan Cruyff said: "Barcelona were weak. Burgos were dragging their heels, doing what they could and Barcelona failed to make the most of their opportunities."

Pastoriza took over earlier this month after the sacking of predecessor Luis Aragones.

Even Real Madrid's 3-0 win at Albatore gave only moderate satisfaction to coach Benito Floro.

"The goalless first half was complicated by Fernando Munoz's (Nando) sending off and Albatore's strong performance," he said. "But in the second they played like real champions."

Deportivo Coruna continue to enjoy life at the top. Their 5-1 win over Real Sociedad was their 15th in 23 league games. They remain two points ahead of Real and four clear of Barcelona.

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR TUESDAY FEBRUARY 23, 1993

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES:

Something may linger from last evenings activities that could compel your attention this morning. Just as well — you'll likely get the chance to shake it with some exerted movement as moon enters Aries late a.m.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19)

Your creative ideas are splendid

this day and you would be wise to focus upon making them work out much as you possibly can so outgoing.

Taurus: (April 20 to May 20)

A day to spend as much time and with your family as possible letting them know of your devotion and appreciation that they are there.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21)

You can make as many calls and visits as convenient and especially with those who have made a big success of life that you would wisely emulate.

MONSIEUR CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21)

Use this day to round out your awareness of financial matters and the best means by which you can get a greater amount of this worlds goods.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21)

Take some time out now to show you know how to project yourself before the general public and you greatly add to your reputation standing in the community.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20)

This is the day to spare more time improving your surroundings and adding touches of colour, art, music, beauty or other culture to them..

THE BETTER HALF

By Glasbergen



"Okay now...no more whining about lost keys!"

JUMBLE

THAT-SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

by Henri Arnold

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

Economy

Scotch whisky exports surge ahead by 7%

LONDON (R) — Scotch whisky exports rose last year for the first time since 1988, the industry has said.

The Scotch Whisky Association reported a seven per cent increase in exports in value terms in 1992 to £1.96 billion (\$2.78 billion) compared with £1.83 billion (\$2.6 billion) the previous year.

An equivalent of 763 million bottles were shipped to the industry's 190 overseas markets, it added.

Sales to Venezuela, where whisky ranks among status symbols, leapt 52 per cent to £55.2 million (\$78.4 million).

Shipments to the United States, the biggest Scotch export market, rose in value by £1 million (\$1.42 million) to £250 million (\$355 million) in 1992, the association said.

But the brighter export figures were somewhat clouded by a near 10 per cent drop in domestic sales. In Britain, the association said, volume in the 11 months to November — the period for which figures were available — fell by one million cases.

"To increase both the value and the level of shipments abroad in the current difficult trading climate is indeed encouraging," said James Brunner, the association's chairman.

But he added that "we cannot ignore the catastrophic state of Scotch whisky's second largest market, the United Kingdom."

The association said high British taxes on spirits were the main factor in the decline of domestic sales.

Electronics giants seek video harmony

TOKYO (R) — Sony Corp and Matsushita Electric Industrial plan a common standard for future digital videocassette recorders (VCRs), to avoid repeating a video battle they had a decade ago, company spokesmen have said.

The electronics giants want to pool development costs and avoid a bruising industry war over rival systems, like the one between the Beta and VHS formats for analog VCRs, a Sony spokesman said.

That item the Matsushita-backed VHS format captured an overwhelming share of the VCR market, leaving Sony Betamax users with a virtually obsolete format.

But this time Japan's consumer electronics titans are less willing to risk a punch-up. Since the first video wars, they have had their confidence sapped by sagging earnings and flops from bright hope products such as the digital audio tape and high definition television (HDTV).

Another reason to cooperate is the worry that, by the time the digital VCR market matures in the late 1990s, it could be superseded by a new, more advanced product — perhaps a recordable compact disc with video squeezed on using digital compression technology.

"Ten years ago they had more cash and more optimism," said Michael Jeremy, senior analyst at Barings Securities.

He said the rapidly expanding economies of Asia had created an urgent demand for highly skilled Asian work experience at a key step in their careers.

"Generally they have the intention of returning in the longer term. This is just a logical progression in their upward mobility," Mr. Hugo said.

He said the rapidly expanding economies of Asia had created an urgent demand for highly skilled

Australians flee to Asia to escape unemployment

SYDNEY (R) — Australia's depressed job market is forcing increasing numbers of skilled Australians to emigrate to Asia, according to a report released Monday.

The report, by the Bureau of Immigration Research, showed that the number of people permanently leaving Australia rose to more than 60,000 in the two years to June 30, 1992 — the highest level since the mid-1970s.

It said about 32 per cent of those leaving the country were Australian-born and high unemployment was a key reason. Immigrants left Australia mainly to return to the country of their birth.

"There is some evidence that emigration of the Australian-born is largely due to economic circumstances, particularly those related to employment," the report said.

Australia's jobless rate was 10.9 per cent in January.

"Increasing numbers of Australian-born are leaving to live in rapidly industrializing Asian countries such as Hong Kong, Singapore and Malaysia," the report said.

Graeme Hugo, a professor of geography at the University of Adelaide who is working on a follow-up report for the bureau, said many of the departing Australians, in their 30s or 40s, saw Asian work experience as a key step in their careers.

"Generally they have the intention of returning in the longer term. This is just a logical progression in their upward mobility," Mr. Hugo said.

He said the rapidly expanding economies of Asia had created an urgent demand for highly skilled

workers, especially engineers, accountants and managers.

"They are not being pushed out — it is really a pull. They're going where the best offers are," he said.

Last week, Australia's unions weighed in to the country's election campaign, offering to underwrite Labour Prime Minister Paul Keating's economic plans.

The unions, after a meeting with Mr. Keating, agreed to do without wage rises if the economy did not create 500,000 new jobs over the next three years.

Australia's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate is 10.9 per cent but in unadjusted terms more than one million Australians are out of a job.

Mr. Keating, seeking to appear more caring and more cooperative than his conservative opponents, agreed in return to offer a "wages safety-net" to help workers.

"We are doing this to maintain the spirit of cooperation between the government and the work force to achieve higher growth and higher employment," Mr. Keating told reporters after he and the unions struck the deal.

"... The trade union movement is now committed to accepting the postponement of both wage claims and scheduled increases in employer-funded superannuation (retirement) payments if employment creation falls short of what we believe is an achievable minimum," Mr. Keating said.

The talks were the latest, and possible last, in a 10-year tradition of "accord" agreements between the unions, under the auspices of the Australian Council of Trade Unions, and the present Labour government.

Labour, in office since March 1983, faces an election on March 13. It trails the Liberal-National opposition in the opinion polls, chiefly because of high unemployment.

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Relief flights land in Sarajevo; aid boycott ends

SARAJEVO (R) — Relief flights began landing again at Sarajevo Monday as the city authorities formally lifted a boycott of U.N. aid.

The Bosnian government had already announced an end to the boycott, mounted in sympathy with tens of thousands of Muslims cut off by rebel Serbs in the east of the country.

But the city council, which initiated the refusal to accept supplies, said it would wait for the safe arrival of a U.N. relief convoy in the Muslim-held eastern settlement of Zepa.

The Serbs allowed the convoy through to Zepa Sunday.

A second U.N. convoy, due to set out from Belgrade Monday with emergency supplies for Muslims in the eastern town of Gorazde, was postponed for a day at the request of the Serbs.

They asked for the delay because a funeral was being held Monday for Serbs who had been found in graves near the convoy's route. They say the Serbs were killed by Muslims and tensions are running high in the area.

Lydall Sachs, an official of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), said the Gorazde convoy would now leave Belgrade Tuesday.

The Bosnian Serbs, who have promised safe passage for the 12 trucks, asked for the delay because local people were angry.

"We're quite willing to go along with a reasonable request like this," Mr. Sachs said.

About 40 bodies have so far been found in the graves on a wooded ridge in near the village of Kamenica.

Serb forces said the exhumation

tions had to be called off Sunday because the area came under shelling from Muslim-led Bosnian troops.

Mr. Sachs said the Gorazde convoy may be further delayed after it sets out because snowfalls in eastern Bosnia could make it difficult to check for mines in the path of the trucks.

U.N. Refugee Commissioner Sadako Ogata announced at the weekend that her agency was resuming full operations in Bosnia after receiving assurances that the country's warring factions would no longer block aid convoys or food distribution.

Mrs. Ogata suspended deliveries of food and medicines in Sarajevo and eastern parts of the country last week because of the Serb blockade and the boycott in the Bosnian capital. She was overruled by U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali two days later.

Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic announced a unilateral ceasefire, along with the end of the boycott Saturday.

Sarajevo Radio accused the Serbs of ignoring the truce after shelling of Muslim-held districts of the city Sunday.

Meanwhile, U.S. President Bill Clinton plans to meet Dr. Ghali Tuesday to discuss getting more relief supplies to Bosnia, a White House spokeswoman said.

Dee Dee Myers told reporters Sunday she would not expect an immediate decision on the possible use of a U.S.-led airdrop of supplies to isolated towns blocked by Serb forces.

Mr. Clinton said Sunday the United States was consulting other members of the U.N. Security Council on getting more relief supplies to Bosnia.

He also said he was going to

meet officers from Bosnian, Croat and Serb forces in a bid to implement an agreement to open humanitarian corridors in and out of the city, at least for civilians.

The U.N. commander said the proposal had been agreed by the combatants in December but had never been put into effect.

"It will be the objective to lift the siege of Sarajevo by opening three 'blue routes': One to Mostar, the other to Zenica, the other to Zvornik," he said.

"It could be done in a very few days with the existing forces on the ground."

In Croatia, Zagreb Radio said Serb forces holding the Krajina enclave fired rockets into the Adriatic port of Zadar early Monday and shelled the defence lines.

Croatian military positions around Karlovac, 50 kilometres south of the capital Zagreb, were also bombed, it added.

Fighting between Croats and Serbs in Croatia resumed last month when the Croatian army attacked Krajina to recapture a strategic bridge and a hydroelectric dam.

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Police make an arrest after a crowd disturbance outside South Sefton Magistrates Court as two ten-year-old boys were charged with the murder of James Bulger (AP photo)

2 10-year-old boys charged with toddler's murder in Britain

LIVERPOOL, England (R) — An angry crowd screaming abuse rushed a van carrying two boys charged with murdering a toddler from court Monday in a case which has outraged Britain.

Police made five arrests.

More than 300 people gathered outside the court, where the boys accused of murdering two-year-old James Bulger were remanded in local authority care until their next court appearance on March 3. The mood turned violent when the two youngsters were driven away.

"Bastards! bastards!" screamed a section of the crowd. A rock and an egg were thrown and some people hammered on the side of the van with their fists.

After the arrests were swiftly made by waiting policemen, people turned on the police, waving their fists and chanting: "Let them go let them go," referring to the five who had been arrested.

Emotions in Liverpool have been running high since the toddler's badly body was found by a railway line a week ago after he

The officers withdrew and the crowd dispersed.

"We're here for James. We're sick with grief and we want to show some respect," said one man outside the court with his wife and two children. "We're all devastated by what happened to poor little James."

The dead toddler's parents and police had called for calm after a near-riot last week when an enraged crowd tried to grab a 12-year-old suspect whom police had seized in a high-profile raid.

Bulger's killing 10 days ago — one of just six cases in the past decade of murder involving child defendants under age 14 — has stunned Britons and touched off a national debate about rising crime and social decay in inner cities.

During the six-minute hearing, the accused boys spoke only to confirm their ages and identities and showed no obvious signs of distress. The boys were formally charged by police Saturday.

One boy sat with a lawyer and a social worker while the other was accompanied by his father and a lawyer. The boy with his father yelled frequently and occasionally glanced towards his co-accused.

As is normal in youth courts the public did not attend.

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Talks between representatives of Mr. Yeltsin and Mr. Khasbulatov at the weekend brought no compromise on power-sharing.

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Yeltsin is being reduced to figurehead aide

MOSCOW (R) — An aide of Boris Yeltsin charged Monday the president's opponents had reduced him virtually to a figurehead akin to the queen of England and said a power struggle could lead to Russia's disintegration.

Mikhail Poltoranin, head of the president's Federal Information Centre, said attacks by the conservative legislature on Mr. Yeltsin's power were encouraging breakaway trends in Russia's regions.

"If the executive power (the presidency) is not strengthened, this will lead unavoidably to the disintegration of Russia," Mr. Poltoranin said in a statement issued by ITAR-TASS News Agency.

Mr. Poltoranin, who has a long-standing feud with the parliament chairman, lost his position as deputy prime minister in November under pressure.

Mr. Yeltsin's powers have been steadily eroded over the last three months by the Russian legislature led by its conservative Chairman Ruslan Khabsulatov.

A two-yearly session of the Congress forced him to abandon his cabinet chief, Yegor Gaidar, 10 weeks ago and name a new premier, Viktor Chernomyrdin. The conservative success raised uncertainty over the ultimate fate of Mr. Yeltsin's radical reforms.

The conflict has flared again this month, with opposition growing to an April referendum Mr. Yeltsin had hoped would end Congress's power over government. The president believes he should have freedom to choose his own government and dispose of federal property still under broad parliamentary control.

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COLUMN 10

Despite rain, Rio's carnival parade far from a washout

RIO DE JANEIRO (R) — The incessant rain and deep puddles were not enough to dampen the spirits of Brazil's carnival revelers as Rio De Janeiro's glittering parade of samba schools got underway Sunday night. The parade competition, which last until dawn and then continues

Monday night, is the highlight of Rio's pre-lenten carnival, which began last Thursday and ends on Ash Wednesday. As white costumes turned black and dancers slid in the mud that accumulated in the samba stadium built for the event, the marchers appeared to sing louder. "The rain does not bother us. The harder it rains, the more spirit we have," said Ana Cristina Alves Pereira of the Vila Isabel School.

The rain was a welcome relief for those who must dance for an hour in the sweltering heat. "The rain cools us off," said Vanda Viana Da Silva, also of the Vila Isabel School.

The Unidos Da Ponte School kicked off the parade with an appropriate carnival theme — the history of masks. The first float illustrated the court of Rei Momo, the king of carnival and the school continued with a golden sphinx and Venetian masks.

Each school is judged on a variety of items, ranging from costumes and music to theme.

Tenzing's grandson to attempt Everest

WELLINGTON (R) — Sherpa Tashi Tenzing, grandson of one of the two men who first climbed Mount Everest, said Monday he plans to try to scale the world's highest mountain on the 40th anniversary of the first ascent.

Tashi Tenzing, 27, told the New Zealand Herald during a visit to New Zealand that he plans an international expedition led by a sherpa — one of the Himalayan guides who traditionally accompany foreign climbers. Mr. Tenzing's grandfather Tenzing Norgay and New Zealander Edmund Hillary were the first to scale the mountain on May 29, 1953. Hillary's grandson Peter climbed Everest last year. "I would love to set foot on the top on the 40th anniversary — if possible on May 29 — but it is as we say in Nepal 'Everest will choose who will be on the summit,'" said Mr. Tenzing.

Japan schoolgirl diary tells of bullying torment

TOKYO (R) — A 14-year-old Japanese schoolgirl who was bullied at school has decided to publish a diary in which she describes her torment. The British queen rules under a constitutional monarchy which makes her titular supreme authority in the land, but with very little real political power.

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N. Korea defies calls for new nuclear site checks

TOKYO (R) — North Korea dramatically turned up the heat Monday in its blazing row with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) over nuclear inspections.

A Pyongyang government report accused "some people of the IAEA secretariat" of bowing to U.S. pressure by demanding that its inspectors be given access to two North Korean military sites unconnected to its nuclear programme.

The report was issued just hours before the U.N. agency's board of governors was due to meet in Vienna.

At the same time, the official daily Rodong Sinmun issued a stark warning that the isolated Stalinist state would refuse the inspectors entry, even at the price of confrontation.